Met Office

October 2005

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1961-1990.

UK overview

Mean temperatures well above average across the whole of the UK. England & Wales having one of its warmest Octobers (series back to 1914), although not as warm as 2001. Sunshine levels exceptionally below average across NE England & SE Scotland. Rainfall generally above average, with some areas receiving over double the 1961-90 average.

Carlisle (Cumbria) recording 109.2 mm in the 24 hours to 0900 UTC on 12th. Dullest October on record at Eskdalemuir with 36.5 hours, data records back to 1929.

England and Wales diary of highlights

The flow was predominately south to south-westerly through the month. As a result it was generally rather warm by both day and night and exceptionally warm through the latter part of the month. It was an unsettled month with periods of heavy rain. However, northern and western part bore the brunt of the rain with lower totals in the south and east.

1st and 2nd: A weak cold front pushed east early on the 1st, bringing a little rain and a fresh and rather cool west to north-west flow developed in its wake. The wind carried showers across from the west with some of the showers heavy, blustery and locally thundery but conversely some places enjoyed prolonged sunshine (Torquay 10.1 hours). Overnight as the wind veered more north-westerly the showers became largely confined to East Anglia, north-east England and exposed western fringes. However, a build of pressure from the west killed off the showers early on the 2nd leaving the bulk of England and Wales dry with sunny periods. Despite the sunshine temperatures were close to normal and it was rather cold in the south-east.

3rd to 7th: Under the influence of a high pressure cell there was a ground frost and local air frost early on the 3rd (Redhill Airfield -0.5 °C) along with fog patches. However, as the high cell drifted away eastwards, the south to south-west flow engendered brought rather cloudy conditions to most parts with these maintained through the following days. The cloud cover was not homogeneous with some enjoying sunny periods. Clear periods by night allowed fog patches to develop. It was rather warm in the sunnier spots and the nights were generally mild after the 3rd.

8th to 10th: A band of rain pushed south-east on the 8th but weakened before reaching south-east England and it was largely dry across England and Wales on the 9th and 10th. It was very warm across southern parts with temperatures reaching 23.6 °C at Herne Bay on the 10th.

11th to 13th: A weather front moved in and became slow moving across western parts on the 11th producing some locally very heavy rain. Carlisle (Cumbria) recording 109.2 mm, Milford Haven (Pembrokeshire) 99.0 mm and Keswick (Cumbria) 91.0 mm in the 24 hours to 0900 UTC on the 12th. The weather front drifted further east on the 12th producing some heavy rain across central England. Winterbourne (near Birmingham) recorded 55.2 mm in six hours, with a tornado reported nearby during the evening. A contributing factor in the development of the heavy rain was the temperature contrast across the country with values ranging from 10 °C in Carlisle and across the Pennines, to 23 °C in Cambridge. It was mild across most parts. The evening of the 12th saw further pulses of heavy rain run northwards along the front into southern England. By the morning of the 13th the front had become less active but lingered across eastern counties for much of the day.

14th to 16th: A build of pressure brought a more settled if rather cloudy spell of weather to most parts. However, later on the 16th a band of rain edged northwards across south-west England with the rain becoming heavy and thundery and extending as far east as the Solent.

17th and 18th: High pressure maintained fine weather across eastern parts but weather fronts brought rain to Wales and western parts of England. Later on the 18th rain drifted northwards from the continent into central-southern England and the Midlands.

19th to 25th: Low pressure became dominant through this period bringing unsettled weather with showers or longer spells of rain. Northern and western parts bore the brunt with Capel Curig (Gwynedd) recording 70.6 mm in the 24 hours to 1800 UTC on the 24th. Some of the showers were heavy and thundery on the 25th, particularly in the north. It was also windy on the 24th and 25th with gales in places. There were gusts to 57 knots at Capel Curig on the 24th and 54 knots at Aberdaron (Gwynedd) on the 25th.

26th and 27th: A further Atlantic depression approach the UK on the 26th with an associated warm front pushing northwards across the country. This introduced a very warm southerly flow. Most parts enjoyed a sunny day on the 27th and also recorded exceptionally warm temperatures for late October. In Central London temperatures reached 21.5 °C. It was also very mild by night.

28th to 31st: A weather front pushed eastwards on the 28th and the weather remained unsettled through the rest of the month. Western parts again bore the brunt of the heavier rain with Cardinham (Cornwall) recording 35.6 mm (1.4 inches) in the 24 hours to 1800 UTC on the 28th. On the 30th, Keswick (Cumbria) recorded 20.4 mm in two hours, and Waddington (Lincolnshire) 10.4 mm in one hour. Despite the unsettled nature of the weather it remained warm or rather warm through this period and it was locally exceptionally warm on the 30th with Gravesend recording 21.3 °C. It was also very mild by night.

Scotland diary of highlights

Warm southerly winds dominated the weather of October and were accompanied by fine weather for much of the time. However, the dry spells were separated by periods of rain which, in relation to average, were most significant in the south and east.

High pressure started building from the south at the beginning of the month and an anticyclone was established in the North Sea by the 4th, after which it receded slowly to the east. After some rain or showers in the north-west on the first two days, a fine spell in the warm air lasted from the 3rd to the 7th. It was mostly cloudy in the south but sunny intervals in the north allowed the temperature to reach 19 °C at Altnaharra on the 7th.

An active cold front moved slowly and erratically south-east across the country between the 9th and the 13th. This brought much rain, with notable totals being 59 mm at Broadford on the 9th, 33 mm at Fyvie Castle on the 10th and 87 mm at Carterhouse on the 11th.

Another dry spell soon followed the rain as an anticyclone developed over Ireland on the 13th and became slow moving over Scandinavia. After a brief incursion of cool air, warm south-easterly winds returned to Scotland and lasted until the 18th. Cloud breaks occurred widely, especially on the 15th and 16th, when the temperature at Aultbea rose above 20 °C.

Low pressure in the Atlantic on the 19th and 20th gradually transferred east and high pressure appeared over Greenland on the 22nd and 23rd. Unsettled weather prevailed over Scotland but cold air spread south for a couple of days, the temperature at Altnaharra falling to -3 °C on the 22nd.

Deep low pressure systems in the Atlantic brought a return of warm southerly winds to Scotland during the last week of October. Frontal systems pushed bands of cloud and rain north and east across the country on

some days, with showers on others. However, on the 27th a large warm sector brought an exceptionally warm and sunny day to almost the whole country, with the temperature reaching 21 °C at a number of stations.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

This was a fairly dull month but warm again with temperatures typically 1.5 to 2.0 °C above the long-term average. Rainfall was variable but heaviest in the east and parts of Co Down were very wet with rainfall values locally 135% of the October average.

Apart from some blustery showers on the 1st, much of the first week was settled and quiet with little in the way of rain and temperatures continued in the mid to high teens, unusually mild for early October.

The first decent rain of the month occurred overnight of the 7th and 8th when 5 to 8 mm occurred across the area but this had cleared by morning with the 8th a bright day of sunny spells and scattered, blustery showers.

The next wet spell occurred on the 10th when a spell of persistent and occasionally heavy rain spread eastwards in the afternoon, giving 10 to 15 mm in places and up to 18 mm at Ballypatrick in north-east Antrim. The rain continued overnight in places with a further 5 to 10 mm in parts of the west. The 11th and 12th continued mostly cloudy with some rain at times but amounts were insignificant.

A welcome change occurred by the 13th and after a chilly start with some grass frost the day was fine and sunny with around 10 hours or bright sunshine in many areas. Temperatures recovered to 14 °C. The night of the 13th /14th was also cold with slight air frost in places and a widespread ground frost. The 14th was again bright with some sunny spells.

The period 15th to 18th were generally cloudy again with some light, showery rain from time to time but it was very mild with temperatures again reaching the high teens.

Active fronts brought a wet night on the 18th/19th with 15 mm in many areas and locally near 20 mm in parts of North Down. The rain continued well into the morning of the 19th before turning more showery in the afternoon. A much cooler day on the 19th also with highs near 11 to 13 °C. The 20th by contrast was much brighter with sunny spells and just scattered showers in the north and west.

The 21st was cloudy with some showery rain in western areas but this died away by evening and clearing skies allowed mist and fog to form which lingered locally until near midday on the 22nd. Once these cleared, fine October sunshine occurred in most areas.

Overnight on the 23rd and 24th became the wettest spell of the month as an active, slow-moving front dumped 30 to 50 mm of rain Province-wide and up to 70 mm in parts of the Mournes. Some areas reported their wettest 24-hour period in three years and indeed much of the rain occurred in just 12 hours. Not surprisingly, many areas reported flooding.

Further periods of wet and windy weather were a feature of the last week but it was often very mild - exceptionally so on Thursday 27th when several hours of sunshine lifted temperatures to near 19 °C.

Gales affected some eastern areas on the 29th and more heavy rain on the morning of the 31st gave further flooding in parts of Co Down when heavy, thundery downpours gave 15 mm in just a few hours.

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